

NSC BRIEFING

4 February 1954

PROBLEM OF VIETNAMESE SUPPORT FOR THE WAR

I. Viet Minh controls villagers.

- A. Value in terms men, supply, intelligence.
- B. Increase of Viet Minh-controlled villages in Delta.

II. Reasons for Viet Minh success.

- A. Headstart during Japanese occupation.
- B. Viet Minh looks more indigenous than French-sponsored Bao Dai government.
- C. Better psycho war than French.
- D. Discipline toward civilians better than that of French and Viet troops.

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DOCUMENT NO. 7
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CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 1-3-80
AUTH: HQ 70-2

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III. Noncooperation of intellectuals.

A. "Fence-sitters" withhold support.

1. Hedging against Viet Minh victory.
2. No confidence in Bao Dai -- too much French influence.

B. Answer is political revolution and all-out propaganda.

IV. Viet army depends on political progress.

A. Navarre needs big Viet army.

B. But Viet troops shy of battle.

1. No political incentive.
2. Poor morale training program.
3. Too many "missing."

C. Problem of officer shortage.

1. French don't push training.
2. Viets resent French control.
3. U.S. advice unwelcome to French.